

Spastics News

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Evening Gazette, Middlesbrough

Segregation and discrimination are perpetuated

Conference blames The Society

An unequivocal demand for legislation to outlaw discrimination against disabled people was made at a conference held in Manchester on 9 July. "Equal Opportunities — which way forward?" was attended by 85 people, most of them physically disabled, quite a few from cerebral palsy. The chair was taken by Sharon Hughes, Secretary of Bolton and District Spastics Society and convenor of the new North West Region Consumer Group.

While welcoming The Spastics Society's initiative in setting up a series of conferences around the country to discuss anti-discrimination legislation, the discussion groups were strongly critical of The Society. Resolutions reflecting this mood were passed by the whole conference.

The conference declared that organisations such as The Society "base their existence upon the perpetuation of images of disabled people as pathetic cripples" and it called upon them to stop promoting these negative attitudes through the use of such images.

It deplored "the perpetuation of discrimination by The Spastics Society against people who happen to have cerebral palsy, and against women." It wanted positive legislation for disabled people.

Segregated residential institutions for disabled people should be phased out and replaced by housing appropriately designed with support systems controlled by the disabled. "We call upon The Spastics Society to take the lead in implementing the above motion."

The Society was also called upon "to take a lead and promote active involvement of disabled people in the running of services both voluntary and statutory."

The conference deplored the continuation of segregated education at all levels and urged, among other things, that The Society "take an immediate lead by phasing out its own segregated educational institutions."

Further resolutions were passed on access, employment, education and transport.

The message from the conference was clear. Disabled people want an end to discrimination against them. They believe that they have a key role to play in achieving this and that the force of law is essential for its success.

Wardens sacked

Three wardens and a house parent who were dismissed in July from Drummonds Centre for physically-handicapped adults at Feering, Essex, lost their internal appeal on 5 August. Tim Yeo, director of The Society, upheld the earlier decision.

Warden, Raymond Smith, deputy wardens Joan Smith and Tom Czerwik, and Janet Czerwik, a senior house parent, were all sacked after allegations of misconduct and mismanagement had been substantiated by staff and residents.

The investigation found that the management style at Drummonds had been based on suppression of staff initiative and co-operation. The senior staff had abused their positions of responsibility in relation to junior members of staff and residents. All this was in direct contrast to the Society's aim of providing a homely and positive environment.

The Smiths had been at Drummonds for seventeen years; the Czerwicks for seven.

Further allegations of physical ill treatment of residents have now been made against Mr. Smith and Dermot Byrne, who resigned earlier this year. Under

the Mental Health Act (1959), The Society has referred these to the police who are investigating.

As a result of the affair, Drummonds has a new management structure. One manager with overall control will have three assistant managers under him responsible for care services, activities, and finance and administration. The Society is also re-examining its Centres Department and reviewing its residential provision.

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They're holding on to the job opportunity. From left, Colin Croucher, Ken Iley, Mike Dunham and Ian Phillipson, all members of the Cleveland SIG.

Cleveland Spastics Society gets there first A SIG in the North East

The first Sheltered Industrial Group (SIG) sponsored by The Spastics Society in the North East is off to a good start. Four physically-handicapped young men from the Cleveland Spastics Society Work and Welfare Centre, and a supervisor, are working for Bowater Hills in Cleveland, the biggest employer in the area.

The men have been trained in horticulture at the works centre and are now clearing and landscaping a brook which runs through the factory grounds. The SIG will last for 6 months, but it is hoped to obtain an extension.

SIGs were developed by the Manpower Services Commission to give severely disabled people the opportunity to work in an ordinary industrial or commercial environment while retaining some degree of protection. The scheme, supported by the TUC and the CBI, involves three-way co-operation between a sponsor (the local authority or a voluntary organisation), a company and the MSC. The sponsor is legally responsible for the disabled person, pays his wages and meets the job requirements. The company offers the job after negotiating a fair wage with the trade unions and the sponsor. The disabled person receives the appropriate rate for the job, though the company pays only for the work done, MSC making up the difference.

The Spastics Society already sponsors SIGs, but the Cleveland SIG is the first Society sponsorship in that area, and the first time people have been employed from a works centre.

Wally Hume, Manager of the

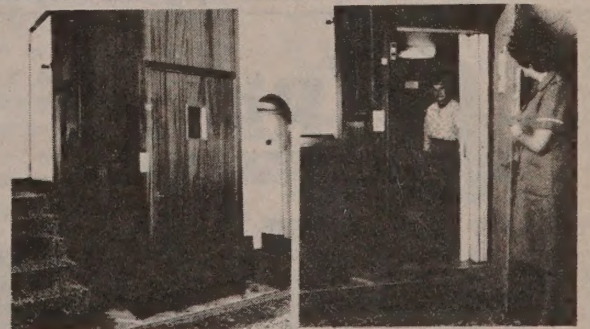
Works Centre, has been the force behind the venture. He appreciates the cooperation he has had from MSC, Bowater Hills and the unions. "I can't praise the people around me enough. It doesn't take much to foul up an operation like this."

He explained how the SIG came about. "It really started in 1981, when, during the International Year of Disabled People, we started sending men and women out one day a week into jobs — libraries, department stores, playgroups, and so on. From this developed squads

who worked on gardens and cleaned up flats at commercial rates. During this time we built up some very good commercial relationships in the area, particularly with Bowater Hills. The SIG grew out of that." He added, "I would rather give people a business deal than ask for charity."

John Lowe, Personnel Manager at Bowater Hills, explained his side. "We had a job of work that had to be done and no one available to do it within the

Continued on Page 2



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THE DIRECTOR

Residential Care—the consumer must decide

This month's column is devoted to an outline of some of the principles which I believe should guide our approach to the question of residential care for severely physically handicapped adults. It is an expression of personal opinion rather than a statement of Society policy, and I hope it may provoke some responses.

There is in my view one fundamental principle which should guide the whole of our approach: the over-riding importance of the consumer.

The existence of a severe physical handicap imposes constraints on the type of accommodation in which individuals can live. However, it need not impose any constraint on the extent to which those individuals determine their own environment.

There is a danger that well meaning people who are giving their time and strength to help handicapped adults feel that they know best. Because great progress has been made in the last 30 years, and because this improvement has largely, though not entirely, been brought about by the determination and initiative of the able-bodied, it is easy to assume that further progress can only be made in the same way.

I do not believe this to be the case. The dominant voice in the



next phase of developing residential accommodation must be that of the consumer.

From this guiding principle follow three others. First, the need for wide diversity in residential provision. Even within a single establishment, there has to be a flexibility of approach on the part of the planners to ensure that individual expression is given full scope.

Administrators, including many in voluntary organisations, like to have things arranged in a tidy way. But residential provision is not for the benefit of administrators, planners or staff. It is for individual residents. Every home or residence occupied by non-handicapped people differs in some way or another from others. In this sense, the world is an untidy place, and it is right that this should be the case.

Every individual should be given an opportunity to stamp his or her personality on the environment and this opportunity is particularly important for the severely physically handicapped. Prospective residents must be involved at the planning stage of new residential centres so that individuality can be expressed as early as possible.

One consequence of allowing consumers to make their own decisions is that some may go against the received wisdom of the time and cause surprise to administrators and planners. For example, some people may prefer to share a room than have a single room so before everybody is put into single rooms let us find out what the consumer wants.

The second principle is that as far as possible life for severely physically handicapped people should be the same as it is for everybody else. Most young people who leave school and start work find that a time comes when they wish to move away from their parents' home and set up an establishment on their own. Wherever possible, severely physically handicapped adults should have the same opportunity to leave home. It will often be a difficult moment for the parents because they will have played a larger than normal role in caring for their offspring during childhood and adolescence. It is therefore hard for these parents to be persuaded that their children, now young adults, can really cope with life outside.

Nevertheless, nothing is more damaging to the parent/child relationship in the long run, than for young adults to remain at home with their parents for longer than is normal.

The last principle is really a reflection of the first. It is the absolute necessity of involving the client group in the decision making process on a continuing basis. The logical consequence of involving prospective residents at the planning stage is to involve all residents thereafter in all decisions which affect the environment in which they live.

Tim X

A SIG in the North East

continued from page 1

company. We had the connection with Cleveland Spastics Society and we knew the standard of their work." He acknowledged that as a large employer Bowater Hills felt some social obligation. "We wanted to give the lads an opportunity."

He is pleased with the results so far. "They are really good workers."

His view is echoed by the supervisor, George Rowntree.

"When they're keen like this, it's easy. They've really come on a treat."

He approves of SIGs. "Without them, where are they going to get experience? There should be more, and for girls too."

Tom Jubb has a daughter at the Cleveland Works Centre. He is also a shop steward and Chairman of the Works Committee at Bowater Hills. The company already employs some handicapped people, but he wanted a SIG so as to set an example to other companies in the area. "If

we don't support disabled people, how will they get to jobs?"

As a trade unionist, he approves of the scheme. "We like it because there's no exploitation of labour — they are getting a full wage. We prefer this to the YOP scheme."

He admits that there was some opposition among the workers to begin with, but now everything is running smoothly.

In fact, the SIG do not see as much of the other workers as they might, because they are working outside the factory. "We say good morning, and talk sometimes, and they are friendly," says Ian Phillipson, one of the group.

What concerns Ian and the others is the future. As Colin Croucher put it, "It's done me a world of good and I want to go on."

Philip Eglington, Disablement Advisory Services Manager for MSC at Middlesbrough, hopes there can be an extension, but if not, there are other companies who have expressed interest. "The SIG scheme offers more genuine opportunities for integration than sheltered workshops," he said. "It builds confidence; and it increases expectations." Isn't that the fly in the ointment?

"That's a reality of life we cannot protect people from," says Wally Hume. "The situation is explained clearly to a prospective SIG, and he is also told that if a vacancy arises in the company, he will be in competition with other people. A place is always kept open for him at the work centre." The four young men at Cleveland took the risk. Everyone hopes it will pay off.

Letters to the Editor

Spastics News 12 Park Crescent London W1N 4EQ

We have a lot to offer

Congratulations on becoming the new Editor of *Spastics News*. I am looking forward to seeing the new look over the next few months, and I hope that it can be introduced to many more new readers. I have contributed to it from time to time, and was given two pages in January 1975 and September 1980. I am also going on a two day course at Castle Priory College shortly, to which I am looking forward.

I always think that we older spastic people who can remember the days when there was no help for us or our parents, and have watched The Society's work grow over the last 30 years, have a lot of help to offer younger cerebral palsied people and their parents to cope with what at first seems a hopeless situation even in these enlightened days, when there is help and advice but still no cure or prevention.

I still find that the older per-

son finds it very difficult to accept me as I am, (I am still "funny" and should be put away out of their sight) but the younger people always cope very well and understand quickly, and children usually ask me a lot of questions and are happy and friendly towards me.

Marjorie Chappell,
6 Butts Close,
Marnhill,
Sturminster,
Newton, Dorset.

It's smashing!

In your last issue you were asking people what they thought about *Spastics News*. Well I think that it is smashing and I always like to read about disabled people, especially the children and their achievements. Also to see what fresh news you tell us. I think you put it the best you can, so what ever you print I will always try to read it!

Doreen Parry,
Musgrave Court,
Cranshaw Road,
Pudsey, Yorkshire.

Wilfred Pickles Speech Day

The last of many happy events stretching over twenty-seven years

At Wilfred Pickles School, Duddington, Lincolnshire, sadness mingled with pride when Mrs. Joyce Smith came to give away the prizes for the last time. Sadness, because the school is to be closed in August 1984. Pride, because, as Mrs. Smith said, it has made a significant contribution to the education of cerebral-palsied children over 27 years. Fewer children born with handicaps, and more active integration into ordinary schools has decreased the demand for schools like Wilfred Pickles. The students will be transferred to other appropriate schools over the coming year.

They will take with them not only an appreciation of academic achievement, but of courage and daily effort that they have learned in the school. To Eric Smith, who has been Chairman of the Governors for all of the 27 years, these qualities are equally important—as he said in his speech.

Mrs. Mabel Pickles came to the Speech Day. She offered the bust of her husband, comedian Wilfred Pickles, to Mrs. Smith, who suggested that it should go in the reception area at Park Crescent where it will remain as a memorial to his concern for cerebral-palsied people.

David Pearson



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David Holmes, captain of Norman House, receives the house cup from Mrs. Joyce Smith.

REPORTS

Press conference

End discrimination against married women

The ending of discrimination against married and cohabiting women who care for disabled people or who are disabled themselves was the subject of a press conference in the House of Commons on 13 July.

Jack Ashley MP spoke from the chair about the unjust discrimination which prevents married women receiving Invalid Care Allowance and leads to disabled married women having to perform a household duties test before becoming eligible for Non-Contributory Invalidity Pension (HNCIP). He declared this situation to be unjustified in a modern world and reaffirmed his support to the ICA/HNCIP campaign organised by over 50 organisations including The Spastics Society.

The three main political parties were represented by Baroness Gardner (Conservative), Jo Richardson MP (Labour) and Baroness Robson (Liberal) who spoke with one voice in urging the government to end this discrimination.

A more personal note was added by Mrs. Diane Curtis from Bexley, Kent. She cares full-time for her 20-year-old son, Scott, who is paralysed from the shoulders down. Despite giving up her full-time job and suffering considerable hardship, she is unable to claim ICA.

Later, a deputation went to 10 Downing Street to present a large-size cheque to the Prime Minister for her to sign as a fellow married woman. The cheque was made out for £19.70 a week (the benefit rate) and made payable to the 350,000 married and cohabiting women denied these benefits.

The House of Commons had another opportunity to discuss these issues on 20 July when the EEC Regulations on equalisation of men and women were debated. At the end of 1984, when the Regulation comes into force, ICA and HNCIP will be the only two benefits which discriminate against married women.

The Social Security Advisory Committee in its recent report on the Regulation has added its voice to the protests.

Amanda Jordan

SPOD Conference

Learning, Loving and Living

The University of Manchester hosted a conference of international delegates, both able-bodied and disabled, for four days last month.

In her opening address, the Chairman, Dr. Wendy Green-gross, outlined the difference between the conference held in 1979, which had been technical and professional, and the 1983 conference, which consisted of short papers and seminar discussions on a wide variety of sexual and personal relationship problems of disabled people.

The unique facilities offered by Manchester University meant



Coffee break at SPOD's Second International Conference. From left to right: Sally O'Connor, who runs a telephone counselling service for people with multiple sclerosis; Margaret Morgan, Vice-Chairman of SPOD; Liz Blewitt, a telephone counsellor with the Outsiders Club; Morgan Williams, General Secretary of SPOD; Karin Ollson, a social worker from Lund, Sweden; Mike Long, a social worker with Gwent Social Services; Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd, a lecturer who is taking a social work course; Barrie Alder from Harpenden; Lin Berwick, a counsellor; and Mary Davies, SPOD's Education and Training Officer.

that many more people with disabilities attended the second conference, and this was seen by SPOD (The Association to Aid the Sexual and Personal Relationships of Disabled People) as tangible evidence of the four years of progress between conferences.

Learning, Loving and Living was not only the title, but the reality of the conference. Delegates and speakers alike learned of each other's problems and of some of the answers. Living was expressed by the fact that there were no disabled/able-bodied differences, no professional/client rivalry. Here everyone was equal. Interpretation of difficult speech was as eagerly awaited as the erudite comments from the platform.

Loving was expressed by the offers of help to all delegates from all delegates.

The content of the conference included a variety of audio-visual material, some of which was completely new, and some perhaps needing an update.

Equal emphasis was given in the seminar groups, over which one had a great deal of choice, to mentally and physically handicapped people's needs.

It is to be hoped that the conference will give new impetus to SPOD as an educational service. The willingness of delegates to carry on from what they had learnt from the seminar groups was apparent. From the comments of many delegates it was clear that SPOD is regarded as a useful resource, and that its value is ever increasing.

Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd

Working Towards Integration Conference

"We're experts too"

One of the first speakers of the day conference quoted Neil Kinnock on the 1981 Education Act, saying that it could be compared to 'Brighton Pier — good as far as it goes but a poor way of getting to France'. This kind of reaction, complemented by a determination to make the most of what opportunities the act does offer, set the tone at the beginning of the day.

Philippa Russell (Voluntary Council for Handicapped Children) stressed the roles that would prove important to successful implementation of the Act: parents as agents rather than clients, the 'expert witness'

who could offer parents an independent view of their child, and the 'advocate' — the role of voluntary organisations. Peter Newell (Children's Legal Centre) saw a challenge in the law to professionals to define 'normality' and to show in what sense they consider that some children do not come under this category. While seeing the principle of integration of children with 'special needs' as a valuable element in the notion of genuine comprehensive education he pointed to some of the obstacles. Without extra funds only a minority of LEAs seem prepared to follow the spirit of the legislation; many are developing a 'double think' which will reduce the ability of parents to be as influential a part of the assessment process as they feel they should be.

It was this note of warning which became more important as the day progressed. I attended the working party on ethnic minorities and found here an example of an area where the Act fails to address itself specifically enough to the problems of certain groups of children. It does not insist e.g. that an interpreter be present at the assessment of a child who is not fluent in English although the law does say that difficulties in language should not be construed as ones of learning.

By the end of the day the 'double think' that Peter Newell had suggested might operate behind the treatment of parents by some LEAs had become apparent. In an emotional response to one administrator's comment that parents should recognise (i.e. defer to) the expertise of professionals a mother pointed out that she too was an 'expert' regarding her child's needs. She received the loudest applause of the day. Clearly parents want to

use the law but need to learn how they can act as equals — partners — with the professionals in determining the best solution to the special needs of their children. Helping and educating parents so that the law can work with and for them is surely a priority.

Gill Parker

NE Regional Conference

New life for local groups?

The North East Regional Conference was held at the University of York on 2 July.

The option that most interested me was "How to put new life into your Spastics Society group". All the people who chose this option went to get some magic cure for the decline of their own groups, but although we came away feeling helped, it wasn't the kind of help we had expected.

Tony Mason, a lecturer in social services who specialises in the formation of voluntary groups, set out to show that the solution must come from within the group rather than from outside. He used various modern teaching methods. Each person was given the opportunity to speak without interruption, and this produced fourteen different objectives, which were then analysed before voting established the areas of most concern. After lunch we divided into smaller groups to examine a particular topic by Force Field Analysis — writing down the positive and negative forces — and we systematically set long or short term goals through group discussion. By the end of the session, objectives and

Wendy Wheeler



possible ways of achieving them had been drawn up, but the clock beat us and we had no time for the final analysis.

Nevertheless, we learnt some important things. We should listen to everybody and not allow the strongest personalities to dictate the path a group should take. Disabled people should be included in the decision-making process, even if it takes them longer to say what they think. Parents can be a negative as well as a positive force. The group must prove its capabilities and establish a position in the community, then the new members will come to it.

The teaching methods definitely worked in a practical situation. I am confident that each member of the group went away feeling that he or she had made a positive contribution to the day, and if this point alone was applied to local group meetings, perhaps there would be no need of an option like this at a regional conference. Tony Mason's combination of skill and personality was appreciated.

The other three options at the conference — "How people with a disability and their families can live an ordinary life", "Legislation and Your Rights", and "Positive life outside of work" — were well attended and, judging by the summing up at the end, equally hard working and successful.

The only resolution from the floor was that the next conference should be longer — a tribute to Bill Higgins, Ian Croft and Sue Smith.

John Byworth

London Region Conference on anti-discrimination legislation

A militant "yes"

The London Region organised a study day on 21 July to discover the views of people with disabilities towards anti-discrimination legislation. Alice Moira was in the chair. It turned out to be a militant meeting.

During the morning, there were four main speakers who represented very different points of view. Bill Hargreaves spoke first against legislation. He emphasised the need to educate the public. Stephen Burton spoke out against the paternalistic attitudes of The Society and the pathetic image of people with disabilities which appears in fund raising and advertising. The Society's collection boxes and dolls came in for a lot of criticism and a motion was carried calling upon The Society and all other charities to withdraw them and portray a more positive image instead. Merry Cross of Liberation Network stressed the need for action and a united front among people with disabilities. Peter Large clarified the CORAD report. Discrimination does exist, he said, and legislation should be the foundation for a future campaign.

In the afternoon a separatist movement emerged. A motion calling for the three working groups to be restricted to people with disabilities was lost, and those who felt strongly formed their own group. Many people felt that separatism was the wrong way to go.

The debate at the end of the day left no doubt about how the voting for legislation would be: The motion was carried unanimously.

Anne Murphy

INTERNATIONAL

To the casual visitor, Singapore is as unexpected as it is surprising. Times have changed and the Singapore of to-day bears little resemblance to its colonial past. Indeed were it not for the now isolated Raffles Hotel, that bastion of Empire, there would be nothing to remind the visitor that this had not always been a thriving and up to the minute business centre. For Singapore must now be regarded as one of the most modern, most complete and most welcoming cities in the world; it claims to be just that and I was left in little doubt that the changes brought about not so much by time as by an energetic and far sighted Government and a successful economy, were little short of dramatic.

2.3 million people live in an island home of some 60 square miles less than 100 miles from the Equator. The result is a hot and humid, colourful and remarkably spacious city which seems successfully to absorb the many tens of thousands of tourists and business men alongside the essentially Chinese population. Vast housing estates have mushroomed in the development areas along with their infrastructure and their bourgeois villas. If ever there was an opportunity to ensure that disability received its fair share of planning, this had to be it, I thought.

So far as attitudes towards disability were concerned, it was soon clear that the organisations concerned had made some impact upon an already caring population. There was a general awareness of disability, its needs and its aspirations. This was clear from the events that formed part of the Singapore IYDP activities and the results that had been achieved.

But awareness is not necessarily the same thing as understanding, and it was disappointing to see so many opportunities lost in the effort to ensure that environmental provision was right for the disabled traveller, or shopper or worker. Street crossovers, walking streets and precincts, all beautifully designed, and planted with a wealth of tropical goodies, had been developed theoretically



The Spastic Children's Association has pioneered education for cerebral palsied children in Singapore.

Singapore: Awareness without understanding

by Derek Lancaster-Gaye

with the wheelchair user in mind. But I suspect that even the most determined person with nerves of steel would draw back from some of the obstacles that are now a permanent part of the environment. Despite the excellent booklet about access in Singapore, the city seems to me to be singularly inaccessible.

A fine example of public involvement in IYDP and the needs of disabled people is seen among taxi drivers. The major commercial taxi firm in the city arranged for all its drivers to attend a course involving disabled users. The course aimed to broaden the knowledge and skills of drivers about the problems of their future disabled clients. Now, taxi drivers are not only helpful but knowledgeable too.

Specialist services for cerebral palsy are provided in a centre run by The Spastic Children's Association of Singapore. With professional and support-



Singapore looks like any other modern city.

ing staff of around 80, and twice that number of children and adults attending the centre daily, the Association offers a wide range of education and therapy facilities plus some work centre activities for school leavers and adults. The Association has pioneered education for CP

children in Singapore and has been seen to be the major provider. The result was predictable: the centre is overcrowded with little prospect of expansion and, of course, demand is growing.

Singapore has one of the finest general hospitals in South

East Asia and its department of physical medicine offers a regular weekly clinic for cerebral palsied babies and their mothers. As in so many other countries, I sensed a reluctance on the part of professional staff to deal with the multiply-handicapped child, largely because such a child progressed least. Limited trained staff dictated that only those children most likely to progress (at a pace regarded as acceptable) were to be treated.

Housing was generally regarded as a growing problem in spite of the new developments in this field. The anxieties that assailed ageing parents were familiar: what to do with a severely disabled member of the family when old age overtook the parents. Very few residential facilities for CP people existed in the city and those that did were large and impersonal and in the hands of voluntary organisations. Indeed, great reliance seems to be placed on voluntary agencies for a wide range of provision for the disabled in Singapore.

I believe Singapore has an important role to play in the development of services and attitudes to severe disability throughout South East Asia. It is a natural commercial and business centre and by any standards has the best facilities for disability in that part of the world. It has become the natural conference centre for disability issues. It played host to the inaugural meeting of Disabled Persons International some two years ago and the city now features in many Pacific conferences on disability. Singapore's services will therefore become something of a standing exhibit and it is important that what is on display should be of the same quality and excellence as the rest of the city. Certainly the Singapore Spastics Association is playing its part.

Keeping pace with technological change is one thing, but I am not sure that I fully approve of the gradual disappearance of the Chinese influence on the Singapore facade, attractive though its replacement may be. I just hope that Raffles Hotel along with its innocuous Singapore Slings and queues of rickshaws is still there next time.

New CPO directors are welcomed at Park Crescent

Seven directors of Cerebral Palsy Overseas, representing Australia, Italy, the Philippines, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the USA and West Germany, were entertained by the Executive Council of The Society on

28 July. They met Mrs. Joyce Smith, who is also chairman of CPO's advisory board, and Tim Yeo, also Vice-Chairman of CPO.

CPO will be launched in the autumn as an independent orga-

nisation, supported initially by The Society. It aims to be an international bureau for the exchange of information on cerebral-palsy, and a centre from which development projects will be organised world-wide.



Mrs. Joyce Smith talks with Derek Lancaster-Gaye, Director of CPO, Richard Gray, General Manager, Spastic Society of Victoria Ltd., Australia, and Pham Huang Nhue, Cultural Attache at the Viet Nameese Embassy in London.



Four CPO directors from different parts of the globe. From left, Dr. Antonio Periquet, Chairman of the National Commission Concerning Disabled Persons in the Philippines, Bernard Posner, Executive Director, The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, Washington D.C., Richard Gray from Australia, and Professor Sven-Olof Brattgard from Sweden, Chairman of CPO's Board of Directors.

Nigel Tuckett

"How will you cope?" asked the gynaecologist. But they did

Wheelchair Parents

by Sue Jamieson

Bob and I have cerebral palsy, and though we are both in wheelchairs it affects us in slightly different ways. Mine is the athetoid type. My movements are clumsy and at times jerky and difficult to control. My hands are only slightly affected, so I can drive an invalid car. My speech is also affected, though I can make myself understood pretty well. I am a bit deaf too.

Bob gets some jerky movements as he is slightly athetoid, but he mainly suffers from spastic cerebral palsy. His limbs are stiff and heavy, and his left side is severely affected. He has limited use of his right arm and leg, which means he can drive a car with few adaptations. But he communicates by means of a letter board as he cannot speak at all. Perhaps, most important of all, he has a tough outgoing personality. His two part-time jobs keep him very busy and he travels a great deal. He is an assistant youth worker with the London Borough of Waltham and a field officer for the London Union of Youth Clubs.

Bob and I started going out together after meeting at the London 62 Club, then held at 12 Park Crescent. We were in our early twenties.

Our families reacted in very different ways to our engagement. My family were somewhat dubious; and I was sometimes doubtful myself as to whether we should get married. There were so many problems to be overcome. But then we

had, among other things, a greater understanding and acceptance of each others' needs and shortcomings than the average person might have.

Bob's parents seemed to be pleased. His father was ill and it was becoming increasingly difficult for him to carry Bob upstairs, so it may have been a load off his mother's mind when we married in October, 1973, and moved into a local authority hostel. We lived there for 6½ months until we found somewhere where we could manage.

We had not planned to have children. We thought we wouldn't be able to manage them and also I felt that because of our handicaps it was socially unacceptable to have them. Neither of us wanted to be sterilized so I used contraceptives. However, when I became pregnant with Mark I knew that, like it or not, I would have to give it a try.

The gynaecologist at the antenatal clinic offered me a termination. When I refused, he asked in surprise, "Why not?" I told him it was because of my religious beliefs. I tried to explain my belief that from the moment of conception the bundle of cells one carries is another human being. Then he asked, "How will you cope, then?" I could not answer. I didn't know myself. I asked whether the birth might be difficult. He answered abruptly that they could deliver the baby alright, but how was I going to

cope afterwards?

I was very worried about how I would manage the baby: feeding, dressing, bathing, lifting and carrying him about. I also worried about what other people would think.

The medical services were generally helpful about my physical health but it seemed that I couldn't talk to them because I didn't know what to ask. They, in turn, couldn't or wouldn't tell me anything because they thought that I wouldn't be able to do anything with the baby anyway. The situation got better after Mark was born, that was on 15 November, 1975.

When I got home with Mark from the hospital, the local authority midwife visited me every day for a week. The health visitor and our social worker popped in often after that. We also had a home help 5 days a week for 1½ hours each day. Bob's mother often came to give Mark a bath or take him out for a ride in his pram. So in one way or another we had a fair amount of help and support.

I think the worst time so far with Mark was soon after he had begun to walk. He would think it great fun to toddle off and hide when I wanted to get him dressed, or climb upstairs when we were out, not taking "No" for an answer. Even now, I regret not being able to take the children out for walks in the country, and not being able to play football with them.



The Jamieson family visit Fitzroy Square. From left, Mark, Bob, Andrew, and Sue with Ruth on her knee.

In 1977 we moved from Barking to a very nice bungalow with a garden at Basildon. We got Mark into a playgroup, with the help of our social worker. He settled down well. Sometimes I would stop and have a chat with the leaders and help tidy up at the end of the session. I got a rather mixed reaction from the kids. Some were very friendly — they seemed to find my wheelchair of endless interest. But one little boy came up and threw his toy at me. There was a distinct look of hostility in his eyes.

The episode didn't particularly bother me at the time. What worries me is that the children will have to bear the brunt of taunts and comments from kids (and adults) because we are different from other mums and dads. Mark doesn't take much notice at the moment; in fact he is settling down well at school, but it might be a problem when he becomes a teenager.

We planned to have Andrew, born May 1979, in the hope that it would balance things up a bit for Mark. Now we have Ruth as well. She was born in March 1983.

There are probably people who think that we should not have had children. I knew that we would have to give as much as we possibly could to them. It's a lot more than just keeping them fed and clothed. It can be every bit as bad as one fears, but there are compensations and even rewards, only one shouldn't expect them. In retrospect, I have found that most of my worries and problems are what any mum might have.

Perhaps it is a stupid thing to say, but I am constantly aware of the miracles that are our children. I would call them gifts of God.

(An edited version of this article appears in *Sex for Young People with Spina Bifida or Cerebral Palsy*, see page 9)

Better off on the dole?

Linda Avery explodes the myth

If Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Social Services, has his way, this month will see yet another assault on the unemployed people of this country. Regulations have been placed before Parliament to tighten up the so-called "Compassion Cash Clause" for those who are sacked or who resign from jobs within 6 weeks of employment.

Under present Unemployment Benefit (UB) rules, if a person is judged to have lost employment voluntarily, or through an act of misconduct, he or she can be disqualified from receiving UB for up to 6

weeks. These claimants — and people who are ineligible for UB though lack of National Insurance contributions — then apply for Supplementary Benefit (SB) to tide them over. However, if the SB officer also considers that the claimant was sacked through misconduct, or left employment voluntarily, the amount of SB payable can be reduced by up to 40% of the single householders element. This can amount to a loss of up to £9.30 per week.

Mindful of the possibly disastrous effects on the claimant's family, the architects of SB reg-

ulations introduced a compassion clause. Under certain circumstances, an appeal can be made to have the reduction cut to 20%. Such circumstances include where there is sickness in the family, where the claimant's wife is pregnant or there are very young children, or where the claimant's previous job was of a very short duration or produced very low wages.

The attempt to tighten this clause, coupled with recent rumours of the possible cuts in UB to be considered next year, must be viewed against the backdrop of previous attacks on unemployed people. The earnings related supplement — which would now be worth over £11 per week — was abolished in 1980, while the 5% abatement of UB — in lieu of taxation — and other changes have resulted in a further loss of £5.55 per week. (The abatement is now being restored.) It must also be remembered that it is government policy to exclude the majority of unemployed people from SB long term rates, however long they remain unemployed.

Despite the fact that the growing numbers out of work are largely responsible for increasing social security spending, this is no justification for penalising a group whose unevident position is, in many cases, beyond their control. Workers who have already been unemployed once are dogged by the anxiety that they may become unemployed again within the next couple of years, caught by the last-in-first-out practice which still appears to be prevalent in those industries facing falling demand for their products. Also, as unemployment

has risen, length of unemployment has increased even more, so that the longer a person remains unemployed, the less likely he is to get a job.

At a time of high unemployment, securing work for disadvantaged groups is much more difficult than for other jobless workers. So, married women, single parents, ethnic minorities and disabled people all become more vulnerable to the state of being "jobless".

According to official figures published in April 1982, 17.2% of registered disabled people were unemployed, compared with 12.6% of the total workforce. 54% of these registered disabled people had been unemployed for more than a year. Given that registered disabled workers represent only 1.9% of the total workforce, this suggests that they are disproportionately represented amongst the ranks of the unemployed.

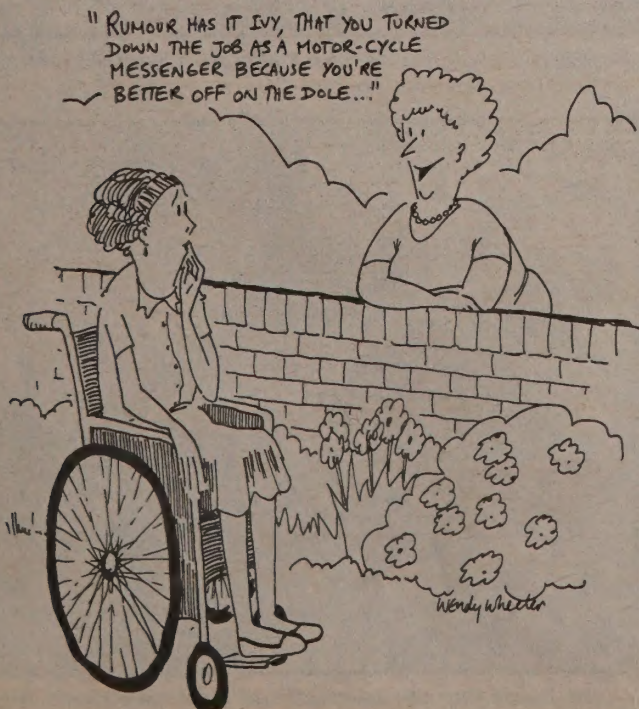
Despite these incontrovertible facts, popular rhetoric would have us believe that people are "better off on the dole", and therefore have little incentive to work. In arguing that this "unemployment trap" exists, advocates generally talk of the "average" household as a male employee with a non-working wife, and two dependent children. But this is extremely atypical: less than 20% of the households concerned are represented by this example. Furthermore, about 20% of those people registered as unemployed do not receive any form of National Insurance benefit.

Research, including reports from the Treasury and the DHSS, has shown that only a few people are better off unemployed; that does not mean they

would be unwilling to take jobs if offered the opportunity. For reasons of pride or fulfilment, a person may prefer to work for little immediate financial reward and, in any case, increasingly, there are administrative constraints on drawing benefit if you are labelled voluntarily unemployed.

Complete eradication of unemployment is both impossible and, some would argue, inadvisable. Impossible, because there will always be a few people who, for various reasons, find it difficult to keep themselves in permanent employment; and there are also young people, married women, and newly arrived immigrants, who will be in search of work for the first time. Inadvisable, because in the interests of the economy, workers must be available to move into new industries during periods of economic recovery. Some also argue that an extremely low rate of unemployment forces up wages beyond productivity with detrimental effects on the economy.

If it is true that unemployment is necessary for the success of some government policies, shouldn't unemployed people have enough money on which to live? How can we penalise a group most of whom are victims of economic strategy, not an army of idle "dole-bludgers"? This view may be subject to criticism, but to talk of the need for incentives to get people back to work is to ignore one very important, irrefutable fact. At the last government count, 3 million people were claiming Unemployment Benefit. Their opportunities to find work were limited to 148,000 notified job vacancies.



Sporting Chance!

Trent Polytechnic



G. Knowlton of Meldreth Manor School competing in the Target Bean Bag event for Class 1 competitors.

The Society's National Games took place this year at Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham on Saturday 9 July.

Weatherwise, and in every other respect, the day was glorious. Some 43 establishments (schools, centres, clubs) were represented with a total of over 200 athletes competing.

The majority of competitors had qualified for the Games after competing in their local Area Games which had been organised by The Society's Sport and Recreation department in June. Individuals compete on the basis of a classification system established by the World body involved in sport for people with Cerebral Palsy (CP-ISRA). The classification system itself is broken down into eight disability ranges, three age scales and then, of course, into male and female.

The National Games got off to a wonderful start as they were opened by Notts County football star, Justin Fashanu, at 11.25 a.m. Mr. Fashanu spent a considerable time signing autographs, presenting trophies and medals as well as chatting with the athletes themselves.

On the day every competitor gave of his best but, as in everything, there were some who

achieved remarkable performances. Ann Trotman, representing Avon Swifts Club, won every event in the class in which she competed. Damilola Jegede, from Beaumont College, won four races that he entered, including the 60m sprint in a record time of 8.6 seconds! Of



C. Blackburn of Calderstones competes in the Women's Shot (Class 8).

the younger competitors (under 15 years) outstanding performances were recorded by Paul Massey of Rushmoor Mal-lards and Ian Kingscott of Brim-sham Green School.

Full credit must go to the staff and students at Trent Polytechnic who gave their full support and help into making this a truly memorable day. Particular thanks are due to Colin Rains, Head of the Department of Creative Arts at Trent who, over the years, has made a large contribution to the development of CP-Sport. His organisation on the day ensured that the Games finished dead on time at 4.30 p.m. — which is some achievement given that there were one hundred and nine events.

A number of competitors were invited to stay on for the Sunday for an England squad training session, in preparation for the World Games which are to take place in New York in 1984.

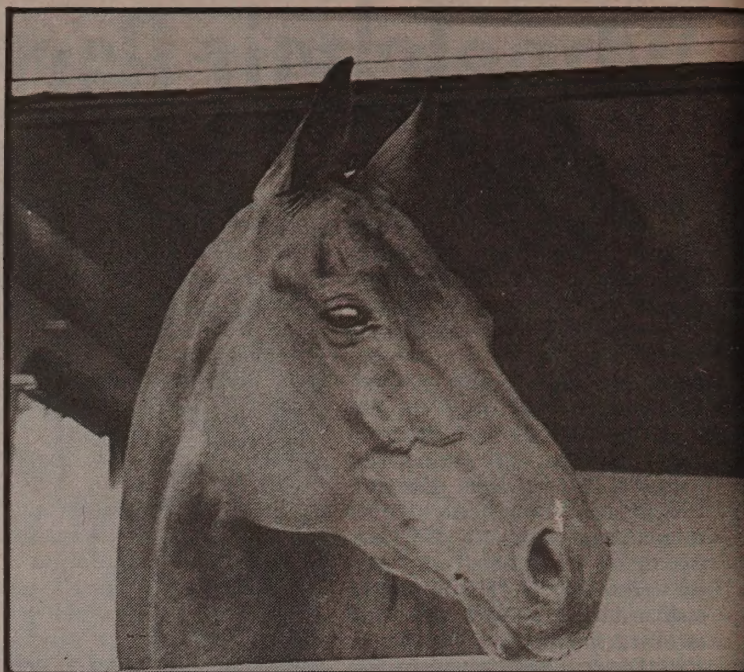
For further information on this, the classification system or any other sporting event please contact Stephen Williams, Sport and Recreation Officer, The Spastics Society, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1. Tel: 01 387 9571.

Lucy Anderson



The start of the Men's 100m (Class 6). From left to right on the starting line:- Stephen Clews (PHSFA), Martin Mansell (Nottingham Panthers), Anthony Richards (Independent), Chris Channon (Nottingham Panthers), Kevin Quinney (Beaumont College) and Damilola Jegede (Beaumont College).

Red Rum saw...



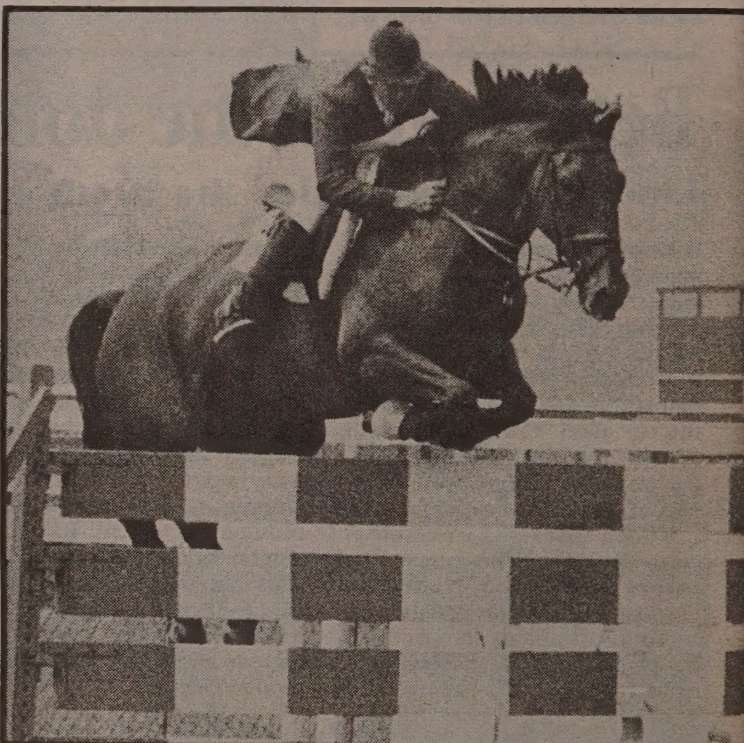
Some of the biggest names in British showjumping competed in the Silver Ring at Ascot Racecourse on Sunday 10 July. World and European silver medallist, Malcolm Pyrah, was there. So were David Broome, John Whitaker, Michael Whitaker, Derek Ricketts, Liz Edgar, Nick Skelton and many others.

Red Rum himself was a centre of attention. People still remember how he won the Grand National three times between 1973 and 1977 and was runner-up twice. Now aged 18, he has exchanged racing for celebrity visits. This Sunday he was at Ascot, along with the show-jumpers, and Rags, the Blue Peter pony, to help raise

funds for The Society

Families came from near and far to sit in the sun and enjoy themselves. Besides two show jumping competitions, they saw pony club games, a double harness scurry, a group of lively majorettes, and an impressive display of horsemanship by a disabled driver.

Then, just when they were thinking of moving on to the fair, the Green Jacket Free Fall Parachute Team dropped out of the sky from 2,000 feet, swinging together on oblong parachutes to come down two at a time like gaily coloured bi-planes. As they landed, two of them didn't fall. Red Rum would approve of that.



A clear round against the clock won Nick Skelton and St. James first prize in the Spastics Society Stakes.



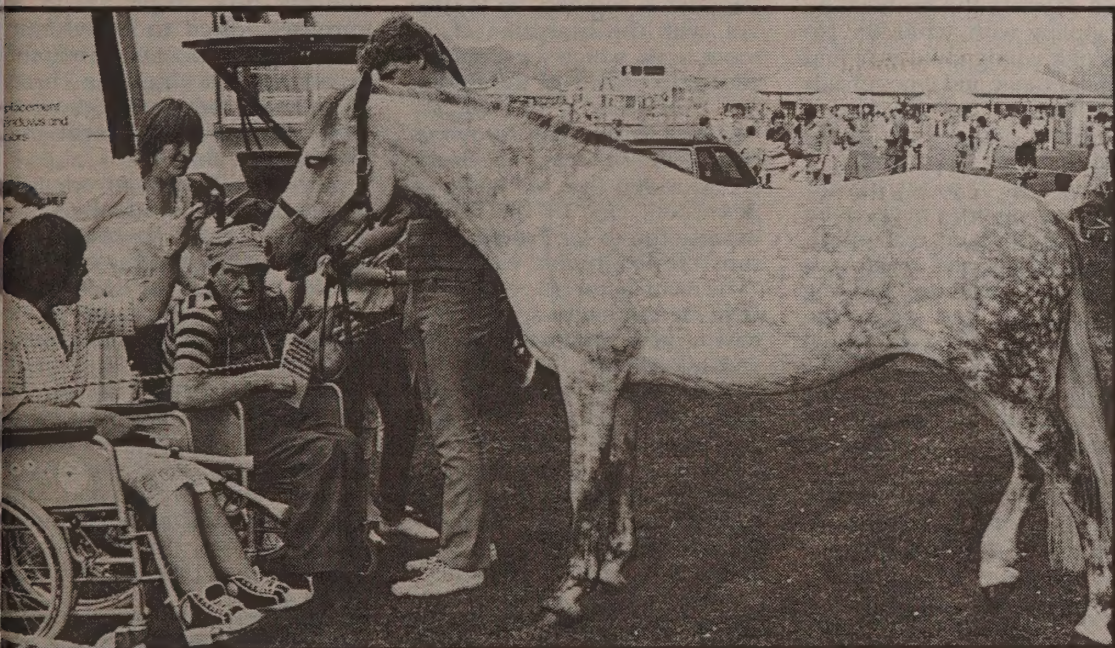
Oops! David Broome takes off and Heatwave closes his eyes, but they came third in the competition for a Top Score in 60 seconds.

STAR SHOWJUMPING AT ASCOT

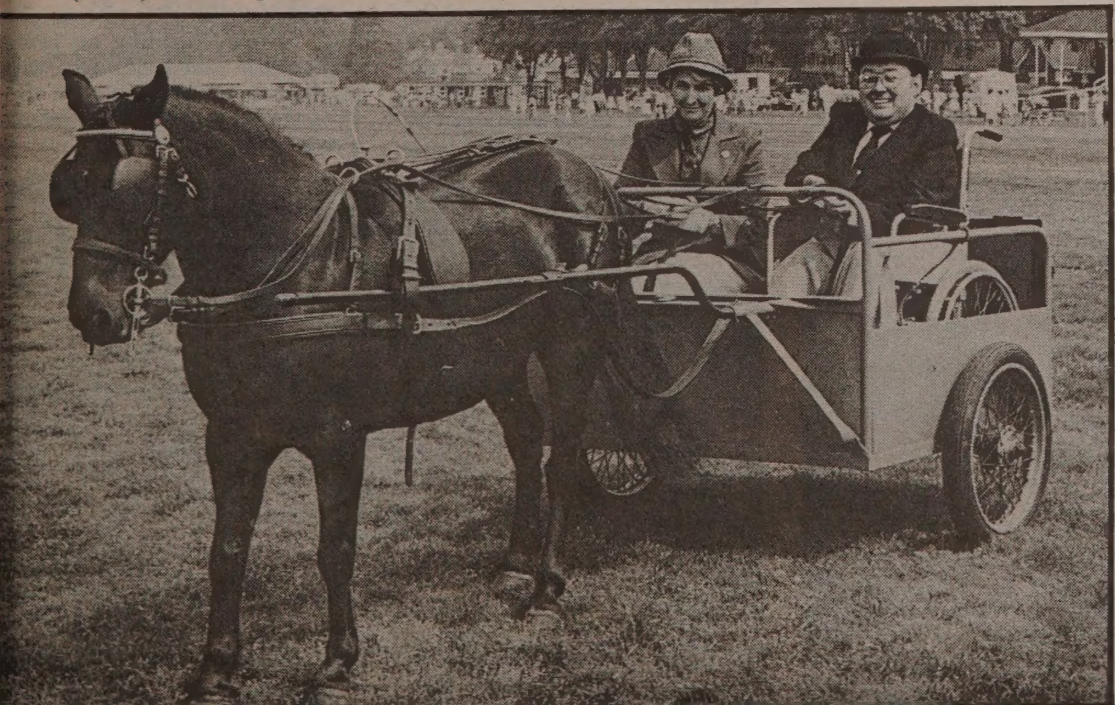
Jack Blake



David Ricketts and David Broome it was a day not only to compete but to relax and talk.



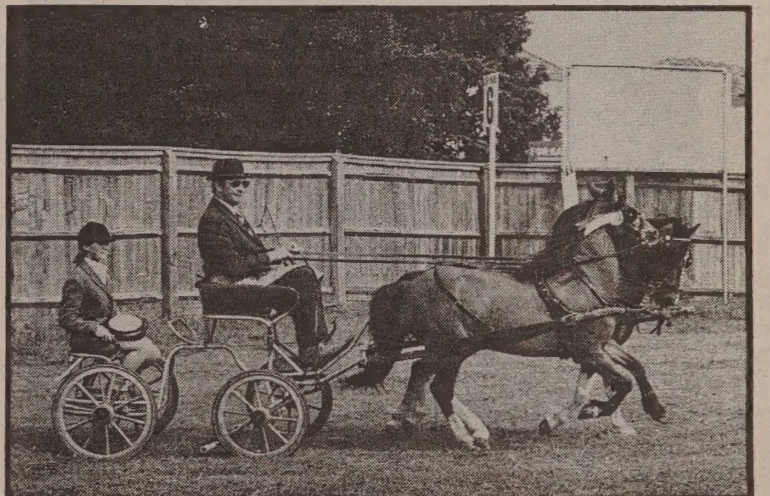
Rags, the Blue Peter pony, makes friends with members of the South East Surrey Spastics Group. From left to right, Anna Stewart, Jennifer Stewart, Ann Gillam and Alan Bowry. Rags, a dapple grey Connemara, was named after the 800 tons of wool garments collected by the Blue Peter Appeal for Riding for the Disabled (1974). Now Rags works at the Riding Centre for the Disabled at Chigwell, Essex.



Neil Portsmouth put Kitty through her paces while sitting on his wheelchair in a Jubilee vehicle specially designed for disabled people. With him was Brigid Hamill, group organiser of the Windsor and Ascot Driving for the Disabled Group.



On target — two of the Green Jacket Free Fall Parachute Team gliding down to a perfect landing in the Silver Ring.



Bubble and Squeak driven by Robert Blake (twice winner of the Wembley Championship at the Horse of the Year Show) take a triumphant turn after winning first prize in the Lombard Double Harness Invitation Scurry Competition.



David Ricketts on Hydrophane Coldstream receives first prize in the Top Score competition from the Hon. Mrs. Beaumont, wife of the Chairman of the Course.



Anne O'Connell, right, was able to suggest an improvement to Glyn's own wheelchair, a Newton Avon, simply by changing the angle of the footplate and adding a non-slip mat.



Liz Proctor demonstrates a simple and useful idea, a clip-on drinking straw which leaves both hands free to hold a cup. There is a large selection of cutlery, crockery and tableware in the exhibition.

THE place to visit

Yvette Sanson saw how The Society's aids and equipment exhibition can help a cerebral palsied child

Choosing the right wheelchair, buggy, toilet seat, bathing aid or cutlery for a cerebral palsied person is often a major task. A disabled adult may find it difficult to assess for himself what would alleviate the problem he is grappling with, while the parents of a young child may find the sheer range and types of aids and equipment on the market too baffling, and end up buying an aid that they never use.

Although pamphlets, brochures and price lists can be helpful, there is no real substitute for seeing and trying out the various products, making comparisons and shopping around. After all, you would never dream of buying a car or a three-piece suite without trying them out first. But where can you see and try out such specialised items?

Regretably, there are very few large standing exhibitions of equipment in the country. Some of the major towns and cities do have them, and The Society's own Visiting Aids Centre aims to give as many people as possible the chance to see equipment in their programme of visits around England and Wales.

One permanent centre which receives many hundreds of visitors each year, is The Spastics Society's Aids and Equipment Exhibition at 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1.

Here it is possible to see a wide range of products, from clip-on drinking straws to a new wheelchair with detachable main wheels for access in aircraft. The range of equipment is impressive, and very up to date. Yet, with the exception of the room itself, which was enlarged and redecorated in the Spring, the exhibition is one of The Society's least costly resources. Nearly all the items on display are provided free of charge on permanent loan by the various manufacturers. Liz Proctor, who runs the exhibition, explained, "The manufacturers' representatives let us know as soon as they have a new product or model, and ask if we'd like it."

New models are often delivered only a few days after they are launched. Naturally, it's good practice for the firms, as their products are seen, but as most of them are involved, the visitors are able to compare and assess just what is available.

Many of the children who visit Fitzroy Square for assessment by the paediatrician, psychologist, neurologist and occupational therapist, include a visit to the room in the day's programme. Anne O'Connell, The Society's occupational therapist, is often able to suggest new ideas to help ease the problems in the daily routine. The degree of familiarity with equipment varies vastly from

visitor to visitor. "But most agree that they've never seen so many aids or pieces of equipment in one place before."

There is also an extensive range of information sheets and address lists, displayed in a carousel geared to wheelchair height, and a selection of helpful books to leaf through. These include the addresses of the few other aids and equipment exhibitions in Britain.

Although the room specialises in children (while the Visiting Aids Centre specialises in adults) it is open to any cerebral palsied person in the country. In order to visit, you can ask to be referred by your GP, make contact through the Regional Offices, or simply write direct to Fitzroy Square, who will arrange for the Regional Social Worker to discuss the necessary arrangements with you. The room also attracts a great number of foreign visitors; therapists, doctors, parents and disabled people.

Glyn Webster, aged 3, who tested some of the products for us, is a fairly typical visitor. In the hope that he will be able to attend one of The Society's schools in the future, Glyn came to Fitzroy Square for assessment tests before spending an hour with Anne and Liz. He was particularly impressed with the PVC Therapy Ball, which raised a few giggles.



Anne O'Connell shows social worker, Lynn Cunningham Roth, the Matrix chair. It is an individually designed support system suitable for children or adults, made from interlocking parts that are moulded to the body. Fits almost any frame. £195 plus VAT for a small child. From Hugh Steeper (Rochampton) Ltd., 237/9 Rochampton Lane, London SW15 4LB.



Joan Wilson, care nurse at Sheffield Nursery, which Glyn attends, was interested in car seats. Glyn sits in the Securon, which has a flat base and fleece lining. Available from Woolworths. Anne holds a small-size Britax car seat, £37. A disabled version, and various harnesses, available from Britax, Chertsey Road, Byfleet, Surrey. KT14 7AW.

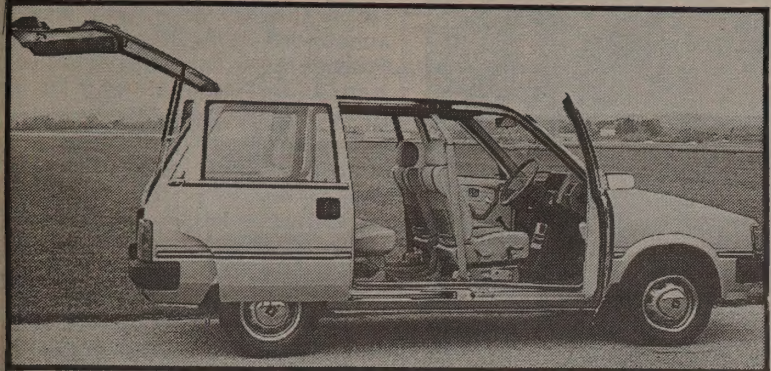


The Newton PVC Therapy Ball offers fun and therapy. £20.65 from Meadway Works, Garretts Green Lane, Birmingham B33 0SQ.



The Rochingham Activity Chair gives stability to lower limbs so the child can concentrate on head control and hand skills. £174. Table and other fittings extra. Rochingham Medical Products, 64 Luton High Street, Chatham, Kent.

OUTLOOK



Motoring

Nissan Prairie

How to transport the severely disabled child or adult with some degree of dignity has interested me for some time. I have reviewed the few worthwhile conversions on the market and large vans which are less costly but more expensive to run.

The Nissan Prairie is the first significantly different small car seen in this country in recent years. Its large sliding door gives easy access to the rear seat and avoids the pincer effect of a conventional door on one's feet as one is lowered into the seat. By removing the central door pillar, Nissan has created a large unrestricted area, and when the front door is open as well it becomes much easier to fit the disabled passenger with a seat belt or ensure that he is comfortable.

Unlike some of the earlier Japanese cars, the seats and doors are large enough to suit my corpulent European frame. The car is higher off the road than most, which makes the seat height particularly useful, and drivers of the old Austin A60 or Volvos will find the firm upright seats familiar and in my opinion more comfortable than some of the softer versions.

As well as the revolutionary rear door opening, the Prairie has a wide opening rear tailgate. The door opens right down to bumper level to make the loading of wheelchairs easy and prevent that back-breaking lift over a high sill.

Like all Japanese cars, the interior and exterior finish are excellent with many of those

little extras for which this type of car is famous. Most notable are folding window winders, and a petrol cap that can be opened by remote control, with a safety device which stops the door opening during refuelling.

On the road, this car is a pleasure to drive. Its 1500cc engine gives plenty of power and a 5th gear for motorway cruising gives a high return for a gallon of petrol.

Technical information

1500cc 4 cylinder engine mounted transversely with a 5-speed gearbox driving the front wheels

Rear storage area 846 mm wide, 1011 mm high (3 ft by 3 ft 7 in)

Open area, with front and rear doors open 1011 mm by 917 mm (3 ft 7 in by 3 ft 3 in)

Overall length 4090 mm (14 ft 6 in)

Overall width 1390 mm (4 ft 11 in)

Petrol consumption

Constant 56 mph 45.6 mpg

Town driving 36.2 mpg

Constant 75 mph 32.5 mpg

Price

£6,015 on the road. Discount available for cash purchase.

Motability loans or help from Social Services may be available if the car is to be used exclusively for the carrying of a disabled person.

The payment of car tax is recommended if the car is to be used as family transport.

John Byworth

Blue joke?

Seen in the Blue Book of British Broadcasting 1981, under classified programmes (page 308): "9. MISCELLANEOUS: HANDICAPPED, ANTIQUES, JOBS ETC."

(Have you seen any "funnies" lately? If so, please send them in to us. Helen Gray, the librarian at Park Crescent, found this one — Editor.)

He has five horses and a back-breaking schedule. He had been to two shows the previous week and was going to three more the week after, winding up at the White City. Yet he managed to fit in a charity ride for The Society that Sunday.

It was a hot day at Ascot and we wondered who felt the heat more, horse or rider. "It doesn't do either of us a lot of good," he said. "But it's the horse that generally feels it more. After all, it's doing all the work!"

The hottest spot he's ever jumped in was Australia, where the temperature soared to 102°F. He wasn't complaining. When you are in that class, you just get on with the job.

Meet Tammy

Tammy Needham leads a busy life for a 12-year-old. Packed around her school routine at Woodlands Senior School, Basildon, Essex are her twirling and dancing, and now a part in the West End production of Bugsy Malone. Not surprisingly, she

Books

Music for Mentally Handicapped People

by Miriam Wood

(Human Horizon Series, Souvenir Press. Hardcover, £7.95; paperback, £5.95)

Miriam Wood has a great love of music and a fund of knowledge as a practising musician. She is also an experienced teacher with a lot of valuable know-how about relating to and stimulating people with mental handicaps. In this book she encourages her readers, especially those caring for mentally handicapped people, to use their interest and musical aptitude to create spontaneous joy as well as to improve communication and skills among all degrees of mental handicap.

She sees music as an exceptionally useful medium for aiding development because it permits the exchange and expression of human emotions without using conventional language. Helpers can begin to enter the private and often socially isolated world of the mentally handicapped person. Equally important, making music and expressing feelings together can build a unique partnership between mother and child or teacher and pupils, which cuts through the normal barriers of convention and human embarrassment and helps people to learn.

This lively, comprehensive manual covers all aspects of getting involved with music, from how one starts developing one's own musical aptitude, to developing communication skills with mentally handicapped people, planning and organising musical groups — including making instruments — and setting goals for individual pupils. Songs, and simple piano and guitar music, are included.

Miriam Wood thinks that the two most important qualities needed for working with mentally handicapped people are enthusiasm and patience. Musical sessions, she believes, are of equal value to helpers as well as pupils. Her book should encourage all those who are working with mentally handicapped people through music.

Alice Moira

Sex for Young People with Spina Bifida or Cerebral Palsy

(Young ASBAH series, published by the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus with the co-operation of The Spastics Society and SPOD — Sexual and Personal Relationships of the Disabled, £1.25 plus 27p postage and packing, from ASBAH, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HJ).

ASBAH's first booklet, *Sex and Spina Bifida* (1978) was so popular that it rapidly sold out. The new booklet has been revised, re-designed, and enlarged to accommodate people with cerebral palsy.

Young disabled people miss out on talks "behind the garden shed", as Barbara Newman, the editor, put it. So they need both general sex education and specific advice on how to deal with the mental and physical problems of disablement.

This booklet provides a balance between discussion and advice. All the information is there about how the body works, about making love, contraception, homosexuality, pregnancy and parenthood, and amply illustrated. There are sections on the problems associated with spina bifida and cerebral palsy and advice on how to cope. There is a dictionary of terms, useful names and addresses and further reading. But what will specially appeal to young people is the straightforward, un-icky, way sexual relationships are discussed. In "Disability and Relationships", for example, the reader is told, "... don't trade on your handicap and feel that everyone ought to be nice to you. No-one owes you anything... but at the same time you have as much right to consideration and love as anyone else. Don't let yourself be sold short".

Disabled people writing of their experience make the whole subject more ordinary, more manageable.

ASBAH hopes that the booklet will give young people the confidence to talk to doctors, and parents to talk to children, as well as being an aid for counselling and teaching. It's a pity it can't be more widely distributed.

Mary Wilkinson

Motoring and Mobility for Disabled People

by Ann Darnbrough and Derek Kinrade
(RADAR 2nd edition, 1983, £1)

Guide for the Disabled Traveller 1983

(Automobile Association £1.50, free to AA members)

Over the past year or so, while learning to drive, I have constantly referred to the first edition of *Motoring and Mobility for Disabled People*. It helped me to narrow the choice of cars, and gave me endless pieces of information about the new world I was about to enter — that of the motorist.

The 2nd edition provides even more information for the motorist. It has an updated list of production cars as well as an extended section on specialised and single person vehicles. There are sections on assessment and tuition, insurance, organisations motoring accessories, finance, and many other topics.

This edition pays more attention to the needs of disabled people who do not drive or own cars. New subjects include: dial-a-ride schemes, children's personal mobility, wheelchair accessories and citizens' band radio. There is a clear explanation of the reliefs available from VAT and Car Tax.

Costs have been kept down by the inclusion of advertisements on every other page. Many of these are useful.

The AA's Guide is also useful for motorists and non-motorists. Almost half of the booklet is devoted to holiday and hotel accommodation. Facilities provided by a range of hotels throughout the country have been checked and listed (for example, lift sizes had to be at least 3ft.10in. deep by 2ft. 6in. wide). Some people may not find the list is enough, and would need to make further checks before booking. Nevertheless, intending travellers can tell at a glance which hotels would be worth approaching.

Other information is given on places to visit, such as stately homes, picnic sites and country parks, and no less than seventeen pages are devoted to toilet facilities for disabled people.

Valerie Lang

Young Outlook

A case of giving the horse his head?

Jack Blake



St. James deserved it. He had just brought his rider, international showjumper Nick Skelton, another first prize and £800. Nick was in the World Championship Team last year and when we met him he had just been selected for the British team for the European Championships.

says, "I haven't got a lot of time for exams."

Tammy has been a majorette since she was four. Now she is so good that she is a member of the junior solo team who represent England in international competitions. She won a bronze medal in the European Twirling Championship at Crystal Palace earlier this year. She's been to

Tokyo, Japan, and this month she's off to Milan, Italy for the World Twirling Championship. "I stand a chance if I practice, that means 8 hours a day before the championship. (Luckily it is in the school holidays). I think I'll do better this year because I've improved."

Twice a week Tammy goes to London to the Peggy O'Farrell Stage School where she learns ballet, tap and modern dance. It was from there that she got her "break", a private audition for Buggy Malone. She landed the part of Loretta. "I dance, sing and act. It's great fun. We are hoping that Buggy Malone has a long run."

If that wasn't enough, Tammy also twirls with the Basildon Starlites, taking part in a lot of charity performances. "Give her an audience and she'll perform", says her mother. "It's all good," laughs Tammy, "I like entertaining."

No marks for guessing what she wants to do when she grows up. "Filmstar" she said immediately. And then, as an afterthought, "Or an actress." If you go and see Buggy Malone at Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket, London, look out for Tammy.



Jack Blake

You could be in print!

Don't forget to enter the Painting Competition, closing date 7 September. Not only are there prizes to be won, but the winners will have their pictures published in *Spastics News*.

Use your imagination and paint the Editor of this newspaper, either head and shoulders or the whole person. Do it on A3 size paper (approx. 16½ in. by 12 in.) and put your name, age, address and school clearly on the back. Send your entries — any number — to Painting Competition, *Spastics News*, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

What's On

Calling all good sports — or not so good ones who would like to get better! Cosmopolitan magazine, together with the manufacturers of the new Orelia orange drink and the Central Council for Physical Recreation, offer you a unique opportunity to see how sports should be done, by the professionals, and to join in under their expert guidance. You could find yourself floored by Brian Jacks, en garde with Kathy Taylor, head over heels with Suzanne Dando, or in the swim with Sharron Davis. And it's all in aid of The Spastics Society. The Cosmopolitan/Orelia Supersports day will be held on Saturday 20 August, 1983, at The Queen Mother Sports Centre, 223 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1. Tickets for the day cost £4 per head if ordered through the August issue of Cosmopolitan, or £5 each at the door. The day begins at 10.00 a.m., and will end with an auction of sporting memorabilia from 4 to 4.30 p.m., with Esther Rantzen, Maureen Lipman and stars from SOS. Don't come away without a souvenir — cricket fans shouldn't miss the autographed cricket bats or John Edrich's pads! The perfect Christmas present?

Coarse Fishing Contest 28 August, 1983, at Ashford Angling Society water at Ruckinge, Ashford, Kent. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Prizes for top weights and different disability groups. Buffet lunch. No accommodation, but camping and caravanning sites can be arranged. Contest cost £1.00 to cover rod licence, fishing permit etc. Contact: Mr. L. D. Warren, 29 Ironlatch Avenue, St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex. Tel: (0424) 427931, 2-5 p.m., by 20 August, 1983. All disabled anglers welcome.

Remploy Festival of Sport for disabled employees will take place at Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury, Saturday, 3 September, 1983. 11 teams drawn from 26 factories will compete in dominoes, chess, snooker, pool, bowls, table tennis, swimming, five-a-side football and darts. Disabled Remploy employees will also present a cheque to the British Paraplegic Sports Society. Details from David Whitter, Remploy, 415 Edgware Road, Cricklewood, London NW2.

"Concerned Technology" is the title of a series of exhibitions which will be touring the country from September, to show the importance of new technology in the design and development of equipment for disabled people. First few dates are: Hastings 8-11 September, 1983, Bristol 15-18 September, Southampton 22-25 September, and Exeter 29 September - 2 October, 1983. Further dates and details from Concerned Technology, Information Technology Aids for those with Special Needs, P.O. Box 114, London SW15 1AS.

The Ninth National Course Fishing Match, 11 September, 1983, at Pine Fields Lake, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Buffet lunch and refreshments. Prizes for top weights and different disability groups. All disabled anglers welcome. Some accommodation available, plus caravan and camping facilities. Contact: Mr. L. D. Warren, 29 Ironlatch Avenue, St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex. Tel: (0424) 427931, between 2-5 p.m.

The Handicapped Persons Research Unit starts a series of travelling exhibitions called "Microfair — Electronic Aids for the Handicapped" this Autumn. First dates are: Rutherford Hall, Newcastle Upon Tyne Polytechnic 12-16 September, The Galleries, Sheffield Polytechnic 26-30 September, Hereward College 3-7



On their marks — back row l to r, Bonnie Langford, Brian Jacks, Sharron Davis, Suzanne Dando, Judy Livermore and Gay Kelleway. Front row l to r, Liz Hobbs, Neil Adams, Maureen Lipman and Leslie Watson.

October, 1983. Further details from Ed Wilson, Dale Robertson or Peter Curran, Handicapped Persons Research Unit, No. 1 Coach Lane, Newcastle Upon Tyne Polytechnic. Tel: (0632) 664061.

A Sponsored Endurance Drive by members of the Nottinghamshire Constabulary in aid of Rutland House School, Mapperley, Nottingham, will be held at Mallory Park Road Circuit, Leicestershire, on Tuesday 20 September, 1983. The event is to be over 500 miles, and it is hoped that it will raise £1,000.

Age Concern are holding a 3 day conference on 21-23 September, 1983, titled "Choice in Old Age — Myth or Reality?" at Ranmoor House, Sheffield University. Conference fees and accommodation charge £70.00 + £10.50 VAT total £80.50, but some special concessions available. Details from Head of Administration, Age Concern England, 60 Pitcairn Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3LL. Tel: 01-640 5431.

"Developing a Toy Library" is a weekend residential course on 23-25 September, 1983 in Manchester, run by Play Matters/Toy Libraries Association to focus on ways of developing an established toy library. More details from Play Matters, Seabrook House, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 2HL. Tel: (0707) 44571.

South East Region Conference will be held on 25 September, 1983, at Thomas De la Rue School, Tonbridge. In addition to the guest speakers and main programme, it is hoped that there will be a sport and leisure display by some of the pupils. Details from South East Regional Office.

Active's Autumn Conference on play and leisure aids for disabled children and adults, will be held in Mill Hill, London on 29 September, 1983. Details from ACTIVE, Seabrook House, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 2HL. Tel: (0707) 44571.

GARDENING

Easy does it!

Equipment to help the disabled gardener



For gardeners who cannot bend down or get up easily, or have to use a walking stick, J. B. Corrie, the wheelbarrow manufacturer, has produced a range of equipment which should lighten the tasks. Easy Kneeler, left, has handles to give support. Turned upside down it becomes a seat. Easy Gripper, right, allows you to lift the rubbish into Easy Wheeler, above, a low level wheelbarrow with "walking stick handle", twin wheels and rear skid. Light enough to manoeuvre with one hand, it also gives support. Available from most leading garden centres and hardware stores.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Society's Disability Benefits Conference, which was announced in the June issue of Spastics News, and which was to have taken place in July, has been postponed until November.

Because there was a great deal of interest in the conference, but a large number of potential delegates were unable to attend due to holiday commitments, it has been decided to hold the conference on 3 November, 1983. The venue, Westminster Conference Centre, and format are unchanged.

Delegates should contact either Linda Avery or Sharron St Michael at The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ for conference details.

Voluntary Service Overseas is seeking volunteers for overseas posts starting in September. Skilled medical volunteers are needed from various fields in many different countries. Currently, 60 per cent of all requests from the Third World are still unfilled. The need is particularly great for physiotherapists after the wide coverage given to International Year of Disabled People in 1981. Contact Voluntary Service Overseas, 9 Belgrave Square, London SW1W 8PW. Tel: 01-235 5191.

OBITUARY

Roy Collins

Spastics News is sad to announce the sudden death of Roy Collins in June. Since 1980 Roy had handled the commercial advertising in the paper, and in the three years that he represented us, he had almost doubled the average annual income from advertising space, which helps to subsidise the production of Spastics News.

Roy was Managing Director of H.A. Collins Ltd., which was founded in 1894. It is an old family business, specialising in the representation of scientific, medical and technical publications as independent advertisement contractors. Roy was the third generation of his family to run the business.

He was a kind and gentle person to work with. We send our sympathy to his wife, Peggy, and to his children, Mark and Joy.

CLASSIFIED

For sale

MEYRA 'BRIGITTE' MODEL TRICYCLE. Hand operated, front wheel chain drive with adjustable height and safety bucket seat. Suit 4-8 year old. Cost £190 when new, accept £120 o.n.o. Tel: (021) 445 3542.

BEC WHEELCHAIR. Dual controls, patient or attendant operated. Two batteries and charger. In good working order. £250. Tel: Bedford 41624.

MEDIC-BATH — a walk-in type bath with pressurised door which includes thermostat and shower attachment. In excellent condition, was £650 when new — only £200. Please telephone Mr. J. S. Forward of 196 Days Lane, Sidcup, Kent on 01-300 4015 after 2.30 p.m.

VESSA ELECTRIC CHAIR — has two spare batteries and is in good condition. £250. Please telephone Mr. J. S. Forward of 196 Days Lane, Sidcup, Kent, on 01-300 4015 after 2.30 p.m.

VESSA ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR with batteries and kerb climber, 2 years old, good condition, £1,100 when new. Will accept £450. Contact Mrs. Huetson, 2 Bromleigh House, Abbey Street, London SE1.

THREE BEDROOMED gas centrally heated Council house in West Bergholt, Essex, to exchange for similar house with large garden in any rural area within 6 miles radius of Colchester. Tel: Colchester 240495.

Nigel Tuckett



Share Your Problems

With Margaret Morgan

conditions which are caused through the failure of some brain cells to work properly and this in turn affects the baby's movements and sometimes other aspects of her development as well. Some children with this condition have spastic limbs with stiff movements, while others may have floppy or uncontrolled movements due to athetosis.

In the early days of The Spastics Society "spastic" became the popular term for anyone with cerebral palsy, but it is not used so much these days except in a more strictly medical context. It is sad, however, when unthinking young people use "spastic" as a term of ridicule or abuse and we know just how hurtful this can be to those who happen to have cerebral palsy and to their families.

that I became more independent and I would like to have a home of my own."

I can quite appreciate your wanting to lead a more independent life and I am sure that your parents will understand, though they may worry at first about how you will manage by yourself.

The type of accommodation and amount of help that you will need will depend on your particular disabilities, though it sounds from what you say in your letter that you could manage in an adapted flat, with perhaps some home help and either additional assistance when bathing or adaptations to the bath. Have you ever tried using a shower instead? You can get a special shower seat and you may find this easier to manage than a bath.

There are a number of Housing Associations which offer adapted accommodation to people with disabilities and you may like to write to the Centre on Environment for the Handicapped, 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NF, who will be able to send you the addresses of Housing Associations and details about other schemes for people like yourself.

I suggest that you should also arrange to talk things over with your local authority social worker and if you have not been in touch with anyone recently you should write to the nearest Area Office of the Social Services Department, outlining your ideas and asking for an appointment with someone who can advise you. Now will

be the time to have a chat with your parents too, so that they won't be too surprised when you start packing your bags!

You may also like to consider taking some cookery classes or going to a centre for expert advice about your particular needs and to look at possible adaptations and gadgets that might be of help to you. Your local library will have details about classes and courses and your social worker will be able to tell you about local occupational therapy advice and special assessment centres like Mary Marlborough Lodge in Oxford.

Benefit is particularly complex, as there is a maximum amount of capital, currently £2,500 which anyone receiving Supplementary Benefit may retain. If Peter's capital was to exceed the amount allowed he would be disqualified from claiming Supplementary Benefit until his savings were reduced to the specified sum, so that he would not have any direct benefit from the money that you had left him.

In these circumstances it will probably be best to consider the formation of a Discretionary Trust, so that the capital will not be passed on directly to Peter. The Trustees, whom you will appoint and instruct, will then be able to make payments to Peter in line with the current legislation to supplement his Social Security benefits. These payments can be made at regular intervals, though there is also a limitation on weekly amounts that can be retained. This is currently £4 a week, though special additional payments can also be made from time to time to pay for holidays, to buy equipment or to meet out of the ordinary needs.

I suggest, therefore, that you should make an appointment with a solicitor and then explain to him exactly what you have in mind for Peter. You should ask him to tell you about Discretionary Trusts and how you could form one for Peter's benefit. If your solicitor would like up-to-date information about the legislation and current benefits, contact The Disability Alliance, 21, Star Street, London W2 1QB (Tel: 01 402 7026) or RADAR, 25, Mortimer Street, London W1 (Tel: 01 637 5400). Advice can also be obtained from The Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ (Tel. 01 387 9571).

Where there's a will

"We have had a very frustrating time trying to find out how to leave money in our Wills to our severely handicapped son, who is now 31. Peter goes to the Work Centre run by the local group and we realise that when we can no longer look after him he will need special accommodation and some personal help and supervision. It is very unlikely that he would ever become self-supporting and we assume that he will continue to receive Social Security payments. Can you explain to us why it is so difficult to leave money to Peter, to help with his future expenses?"

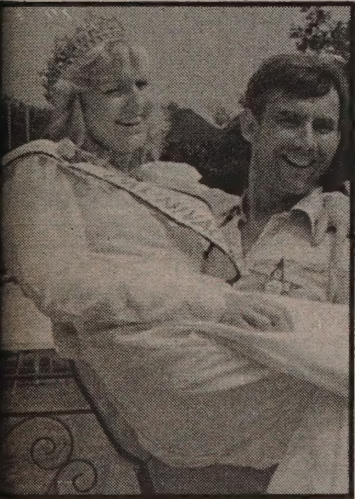
Making a Will can be a very simple or a very complicated undertaking, depending on how and to whom one wants to leave one's estate. It is always wise to consult a solicitor and explain what you have in mind. Leaving money or property to anyone who is drawing Supplementary

A home of my own

"I would like to know about places where I could live more independently. I am 35, and I am still living with my parents who are now in their mid-sixties. I have to use a wheelchair out-of-doors, though I can get around the house by holding on to the furniture. I haven't done much cooking or housework and I need some help when getting in and out of the bath. My parents will be very surprised that I am thinking of moving out, but I feel that it is time

Come into the Garden . . .

Christopher O'Brien



Going up in the world! Christopher Beeny sweeps the Bexhill-on-Sea Carnival Queen off her feet.



Rubinder Dhanjal, on holiday at Colwall Court, presents a bouquet to The Lady Anne Tennant.

Making the most of the glorious summer weather were the stars, the children and the visitors to the 24th Colwall Court Garden Party on Sunday, 10 July. The proceedings were opened by The Lady Anne Tennant, President of the Stars Organisation for Spastics which runs Colwall Court Holiday Hotel for cerebral palsied children. Vice-President Dickie Henderson was kept busy all afternoon, acting as compere, selling raffle tickets and signing autographs, but he still found time to try out one of the special attractions, the James Kimber Hairdressing Group, who persuaded him to take the chair for a cut and restyle! The children were entertained by a Punch and Judy show, and a contingent of Pontins Bluecoats.

The coconut shy did a roaring trade, as did clairvoyants Valli



Open for business. SOS members Dickie Henderson and Peggy Cummins help to keep the money rolling in.

Luschwitz, Bob Davis and Verona. The Grand Tombola was manned by the members of SOS, including Dame Vera Lynn, Peggy Cummins, Steve Emerson, John Hanson, Jack Howarth, Muriel Pavlow, Derek Farr and Christopher Beeny, who as well as being familiar for his roles in Upstairs Downstairs and In Lov-

ing Memory, is a Master Builder and is often to be found helping out with extensions and renovations at Colwall Court.

New Manager of Colwall Court, Bill Elliot, was delighted with the day's events, which raised £3,000 for the new accommodation extension at the Hotel.



Robin Elliott shares a joke with Janine Al-Fahri.



Jack Howarth with five of the children on holiday at Colwall Court — Janine Al-Fahri and Julie Colbourne-Wyatt share the hug, surrounded by the Dhanjal brothers (l to r) Manjit, Niuraj and Rubinder.

Fresh hope for anti-discrimination legislation

The cause of anti-discrimination legislation received a shot in the arm last month when Bob Wareing, the new Labour MP for West Derby, won second place on the private members' ballot. His Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Amendment) Bill had its First Reading on 20 July.

Bob Wareing said that cases brought to his attention by disabled people and their organisations had convinced him of the need for urgent legislation.

"It is no longer tolerable that disabled people are denied the rights other citizens take for granted", he said, and he hopes to fulfil the pledge made in the Labour Party's Manifesto to strengthen the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act so that it provides a Charter of Rights for disabled people.

His Bill, which has support from MPs of all parties, aims to implement the main recommendations of the Committee on Restrictions Against Disabled People (CORAD), set up to investigate the problem of discrimination by Alf Morris MP when he was Minister for the Disabled. It would make it illegal to discriminate against a disabled person on the grounds of his or her disability. It would also seek to give more representation to disabled people on councils and committees advising Ministers, local and other public authorities on policy making that affects their lives.

He is also considering a proposal for the stricter enforcement of the duties imposed on local authorities by Sections 1 and 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act.

"We are delighted that Bob Wareing is using this opportunity to raise issues concerning disabled people," said Amanda Jordan, The Society's lobbyist. "We will be waiting with great interest to see what form the new Bill will take."

The Second Reading will be on 18 November.

Secret gift

Donations to The Society often come publicly, with a fanfare. Sometimes they come silently and modestly.

Meldreth Manor School in Hertfordshire has just received an anonymous donation of £5,000 towards the building of a unit which will pioneer speech therapy for partially hearing children. The cost is £40,000.

So far the school has raised about £30,000 through its own resources and with the help of voluntary groups. With this generous gift, the goal is not far now.

The new unit will contain a classroom and a specialist room (for observation). Eight children will be able to express themselves freely through sign language in a special sound-proofed environment, helped by a specialist teacher using modern equipment. Thank you to the anonymous giver.

Discount Card to benefit Society supporters

An important scheme to benefit supporters of The Spastics Society has just been launched.

A membership card, giving holders discounts as high as 20%, is being made available to us by the London based organisation SUPPORT.

Subscribing card members will receive service and purchasing facilities at a concessionary rate covering hotels, restaurants, holidays, shops, mail order — in fact any service or outlet of value to them. Each member will receive, with his discount card, an 8 in x 4 in directory listing some 200 organisations offering between them over 700 outlets and, in addition, bonus vouchers may be purchased to increase spending power by up to 10% in the high street. These are obtainable for many major retail groups such as Boots, Woolworths, British

Home Stores, Mothercare, Habitat, W.H. Smith.

The cost of annual membership is a modest £12 (plus VAT) of which £9 is a direct donation from you to The Society, the remainder covering the cost of setting up and administering the scheme.

Application forms, including further information, are available now from 12 Park Crescent, so don't delay! Write or call Terri Milton, Tel: 01 636 5020 (ext. 207).

A lucky draw is being held for those people joining the scheme before the end of October. So apart from supporting your favourite charity, and getting all the benefits of the discount, you can also win a beautiful engraved goblet generously donated by Dent Glass of Kendal, Cumbria.



The perfect secretary

"I can't find any fault with her other than that she's going", said Mrs. Joyce Smith of her secretary, Ann Hooton, who retired last month. It was a loss to The Society, and to her.

"If I want to know anything, she knows where to go and get the answer. And I can talk confidentially to her. It's a lonely job, sometimes, being chairman, and if I'm worried I can share it with her. That's the kind of person you need".

Ann agreed that part of her job was keeping up contact between the chairman and other departments. "You're

slightly in a no-man's land", she said, "and you hope you are being a satisfactory go-between".

Ann has been with The Society for 17 years, working for James Loring, then Tim Yeo and now Mrs. Smith. "She's great fun to work with", said Ann. "You never know what will happen next".

In this case, Ann did. Later in the day there was a leaving party attended by all her friends and colleagues at which Mrs. Smith presented her with a decorative china bowl, a candle snuffer ("Yes, I wanted it"), two cheques and a big goodbye card. Then it was off to her cottage at Bramshott in Hampshire.

"I'm looking forward to living in the country full-time. I'm hoping to retire — if I can afford to. But I shall be keeping up with all the Society does". Through *Spastics News* of course!

Spastics News

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FREEPOST, Birmingham B25 8BR. Tel. 021-772 5364 or Ashley Mobility (Worcester), FREEPOST, Worcester, WR4 9BR. Tel. 28575 or Ashley Mobility, FREEPOST, Weston super Mare, Avon. BS23 3BR. Tel. 26011.



Tracey Ward

Hot Shots

When the Ingfield Manor School first XI, headed by the headmaster and staff, invited the staff of Park Crescent to play them at cricket, it was a challenge not to be refused. The two teams duly met on 10 July, on a pitch at Ingfield, which thankfully was small enough not to require too much running on such a hot day by the out of practice fielders.

The match was played in a serious spirit, with a certain amount of pride on both sides. Both teams were mixed, with the four women players contributing well with little concession from their male colleagues.

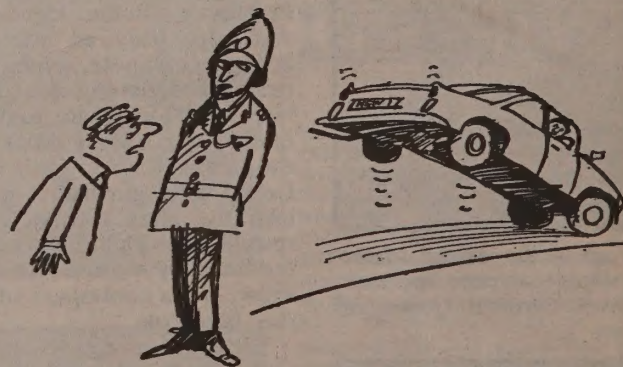
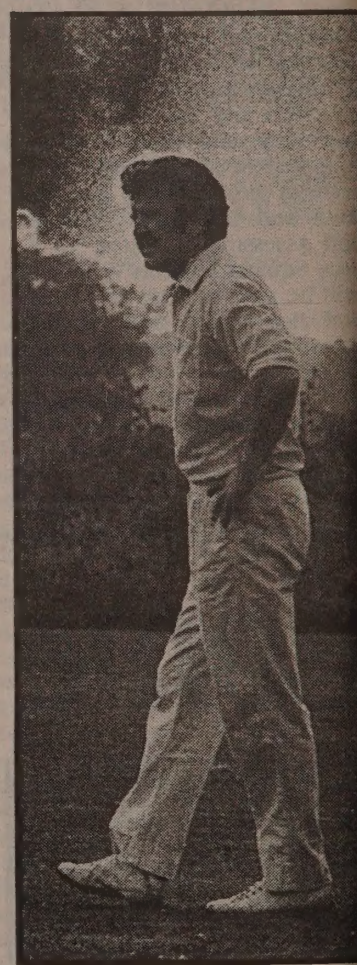
The pitch itself did have some drawbacks, being surrounded on three sides by deep grass and brambles. Many good shots were followed by lengthy searches, grazes and scratches. The Society's safety adviser, Vic Warren, did prove, however, to be particularly adept at locating and retrieving the ball on these occasions.

The scores were close, Ingfield being the victors by 99 runs to 84. The afternoon had not only been an excellent sporting event, but also a good opportunity for headquarters staff to visit their colleagues at Ingfield.

Charles Clayton

Above: David Baker, on the Park Crescent team, bowls to Ingfield. Pam Chrispin, left, was one of the four women players.

Below: Peter Fairweather, headmaster of Ingfield Manor School, looks worried, but he needn't have been. Ingfield won the match.



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